Playa Lingo: the Lexicon of Black Rock City

by PENFOLD

Playa bike
The preferred mode of travel at Burning Man.

Playa hair
Wind + dust + sweat + mud - bath = playa hair.

Playa platforms
The muddy, clompy footwear worn by Burners following rain.

Playa rot
That weird chemical burn on the hands that one can sometimes get from alkaline mud.

Playa time
A strange time zone that usually lags a good 2 to 3 hours behind regular time. Similar to drag time. *Oh, that event's gonna start at 10 p.m., playa time.*

Playa chicken
An elusive, purported to be apocryphal animal, in the same genus and species as the Jackalope and Chupacabra.

Playa nose
A nasal condition (clogs or nosebleeds) caused by playa dust, combined with the altitude, high temperature, and lack of humidity.

Playa droppings
The clumps of playa mud left on Highway 447 as one leaves Burning Man

Playa dust
The fine dust that's gets in and on everything — and it doesn't go away!

Playa Postman
Black Rock City residents Penfold and his wife Dena, who provide off-playa mail delivery to Gerlach, with mail inked with a commemorative stamp made specially for each year.

Playa punch
A ginger brew martini.

Playa brain
The condition you experience upon arriving on the playa, when you can't remember where you put things you laid down five minutes ago.

Playa rules
When everything they told you on the ticket or on the e-mail list or in the Survival Guide or at the Ranger Station becomes null and void.

Playa-fall
First arrival on the playa of the Black Rock Desert

Playa metabolism
Pissing clear, going to bed at 10 a.m., getting up at 4 p.m., and being active all night.

Playa boogers
Yes, that super-dry desert air does wonders for the size and crustiness of boogers.

Playa fever
That obsessive need to attend Burning Man every single year.

Playa bull
The great bullshit stories people tell in and about Black Rock City.

I remember when...

... carrying firearms was not only allowed, it was expected.

... you couldn't see Black Rock City from the highway.

... you could stand in the middle of camp, spin in a circle, and you'd see all there was to see of Burning Man.

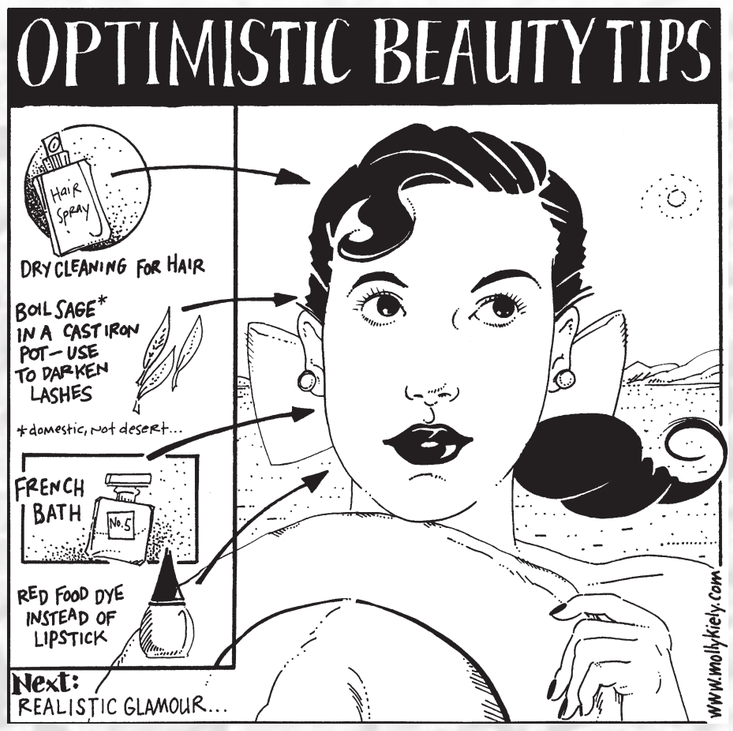
... Burning Man *was* the Theme Camp.

... tickets were $25.

... "raving" consisted of dancing to your car stereo.

... there was no gate. There was a car out in the middle of the playa, which gave you some coordinates ("7.1 miles north and 3.2 miles east") and if you didn't follow them exactly, you'd never find it.

— by Malderor and Playa Kitten



What I Learned at BM

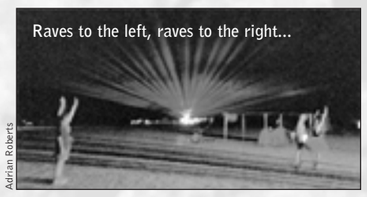
by LOIS LAYNE

Going to Burning Man every year is kind of like going to summer camp for the depraved. Just like camp, you meet all sorts of people and learn lots of new things. The following are just a few of the things I've learned at Burning Man.

Water...it's not *just* for water fights!

Adrian Roberts

Water. Now we all know that you don't come out here without bringing lots of water — but you have to remember to *drink* some of it! It's not there just so you can fill up a couple of water cannons and run around squirting your neighbors. Unless you want to end up at the medical station with an IV drip spiked into your arm due to dehydration (Hi, Karen!) be sure to drink enough water so that you always piss clear!


Raves to the left, raves to the right...

Adrian Roberts

Music, lots of music. It's everywhere. Last year I was surrounded by two raves, a drum circle and some bonehead whose idea of music was to play the sounds of crashing automobiles on a loop at very high volumes. I think that guy was taken out to the middle of nowhere and beaten, because he and his camp disappeared overnight. On the last couple of nights we had a new neighbor. They set up a small stage for some very marginal heavy metal band to perform at 2 a.m. every night. Look people, if you're going to provide music, at least make sure that it won't encourage people to throw rocks at you.

Marc Geller

D.A.R.E. If you like drugs, you better have brought 'em. It's the one thing that people really don't seem like they want to share. It must be because Drugs Are Really Expensive. This year, I brought cash.

Paper, so many kinds. You need paper to write down your e-mail address and other pertinent info for all the new wonderful friends you end up making out here. Paper to cover that advertisement on the side of your rental truck. And for god's sake, don't forget the toilet paper to wipe your bum!

The Water Truck. That truck that drives around spewing water for the faithful? Why is it that this truck looks suspiciously like the one that sucks the crap out of the port-o-johns every morning? Everyday I see this truck and the same people chasing it, getting wet and bathing. It's like watching a bunch of baby pigs fighting for their mother's nipple.

Sharing and caring. You have to have things to give to people. It can be anything, really, so use your imagination. Take the opportunity to help people out. If someone looks like they could use your help, offer. Share things with your neighbors. But get real about it. I met one person last year who said that he wanted to share his mental vibes with everyone — I ended up feeling a little cheated. Let's face it, we're not all on the same wavelength.

Sharing and caring

Adrian Roberts

Watches and clocks. Even though the theme this year is "Time," I say, "Feh! Who needs it?" Last year, both my watch and my travel alarm died almost as soon as I arrived on the playa. And you know what? I didn't miss them one bit.

anecdote

Imagination. It makes the world go round. This is essential! You better have a creative mind out here, and know how to use it. And if you don't, then you would do well to hook up with someone who does. A stale mind wastes quickly on the playa.

Black Rock City. This is a *real* city and *you* helped build it! Everything you do has a direct impact on everyone else. Think about this the next time you head for the playa to pee because you're too lazy to go to the port-o-john. At least take along a shovel, *please?*

Clothes can be versatile. Loose and light for daywear, and another layer or two for a night on the town. Keeping it simple is good, as long as it's not simply wearing a shirt and letting your ass hang out. This "look" is simply *wrong.* Okay, so maybe you want to run around naked, feeling "natural." Well hey, it's natural to protect yourself from the elements, too!

Trends and fads. Even on the playa, they exist. This year, sarongs seem to be in, big time. It's so much fun watching guys try to wear a sarong, having no clue about how to cross their legs.

SLOW DOWN. One of the most popular and frequently-used phrases on the playa — often screamed or shouted. Listen, I like the art cars as much as anyone else, but can't we just assume that they actually work? Do they really need to stir up the dust to prove it? SLOW THE FUCK DOWN!

Piss Clear. I'm always surprised by the number of people who see our logo on the side of our RV and think it means something else entirely. *Piss Clear* is *not* a code for water sports! So many people seem disappointed to find this out.

haiku

Darryl Van Rhey is
A pretty good anagram
For Larry Harvey
— Adrian Roberts

Only one glow stick?
And a four-inch one
at that!
Go home little man
— Gavin Heck

The wheel of time ticks
The millennium it ends
The Man burns again
— Teiwaz

Night time on playa
I love the people
out here
They're so flammable
— Bryan Finch

Know The Signs

About a month ago, an e-mail went out, asking for some ideas for the Burning Man greeting signs — you know, the signs that are posted as you drive into Black Rock City, many of which say things such as "SLOW DOWN — 5 MPH" and "DUST." Apparently, some of the Burning Man people wanted a few signs that were funny or surreal. So Mark Casino and Dr. Cliff Davis of www.cardhouse.com got right on it, although not many — if any — of their sign ideas were used. The following is a list of their rejected Burning Man signs.

HIGH ENTRY FEE

RIGID, SECRETIVE HIERARCHY

"LIFE TRANSFORMATION" CLAIMS

ONCE-A-YEAR IMPORTANT MEETING THAT YOU CANNOT MISS

"TELL YOUR FRIENDS!"

BURNING MAN IS LIKE DISNEYLAND, EXCEPT THERE ARE MORE RULES

THIS SIGN IS ON DRUGS. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN PAINTED WEIRD, BUT THE SIGN PAINTER WAS ALSO ON DRUGS, SO THEY CANCELLED EACH OTHER OUT

THERE WILL BE NONE OF THAT

WARNING: HIPPIES AHEAD

PLEASE HAVE MONEY READY

BEAUTY TIP: YOU CAN MASK THE HORRID SMELL OF PATCHOULI BY NOT SHOWERING FOR A FEW DAYS

Y2K IS FOUR MONTHS AWAY AND YOU'RE NAKED IN THE DESERT. SMART.

SMASH THE PATRIARCHY

***YOUR* CAMPSITE IS 75 MI. SOUTH**

EXACT CHANGE ONLY

TIMOTHY LEARY IS GLAD HE'S DEAD, THANKS TO YOUR NAKED ASS

CAUTION: MORE PIGS THAN LAST YEAR

I HEAR MANSON'S HERE AGAIN THIS YEAR

AS SEEN ON TV

WELCOME TO BURNING MAN '99. NOW GO HOME.

SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS INSTALLED FOR YOUR PROTECTION

SEE ATTENDANT FOR RESTROOM TOKEN

— list compiled by Ted Casino and Dr. Cliff Davis of www.cardhouse.com

Gratuitous, Exploitive Burning Man Crotch Shot

Adrian Roberts

WHAT'S OUT	WHAT'S IN
Art Cars	Art Car Demolition Derby
Bianca's Smut Shack	!camp ATARI!
bindis	forehead spikes
Burning Woodstock	Burning Man
clocks	sundials
communal dinners	Pop-Tarts
communal pools	private baths
Disturbia	M*A*S*Hcara
dogs	robot pets
drum circles	chanting
fashion show	nudity
500 watt sound systems	noise curfews
freedom	control
full moon	stars
generators	solar power
getting in without paying	getting out without paying
glitter	silver spray paint
glow sticks	road flares
kites	airplanes
laser pointers	Bic lighters
Pepe Ozan's opera	*DJ Christ, Superstar!*
platforms	playatforms
raves	circuit parties
spontaneous acts	getting written permission from the Rangers to act spontaneously
toilet paper	*Black Rock Gazette*
shirts with no pants	pants with no shirts
Y2K	Y Me, Worry?

— list compiled by Dennis Hinkamp, Stewart McKenzie, Lois Layne, Adrian Roberts, and Andrew Smith.

Ten Celebrity Fashion Tips

by ANDREW SMITH

Earlier in the summer, your favorite editor, Adrian Roberts, came to me with a concern. She said, "Oh Andrew, with my fast-paced, rock 'n' roll lifestyle, I haven't had time to plan anything to wear this year in Black Rock City! Do I bring a swimsuit? A tube top? A designer gown? What the hell sort of outfit do I wear this year to be fabulous on the playa?"

Piss Clear's very own fashion consultant, Andrew Smith!

Lois Layne

fashion

Well, dear readers, I jumped right on it. I thought and thought and thought, but as anyone who knows me knows, I can't think of anything on my own. Time to improvise. So I pulled in a couple of favors and got some of my celebrity friends to give me their hot tips for what to wear at Burning Man this year. Perhaps some of you have similar concerns, so here are their suggestions:

1. **Elvira:** "I always prefer to wear something low-cut and sexy."

2. **Pamela Anderson:** "Anything looks good in the desert, as long as it's on me." ▶

3. **Cher:** "A sensible Bob Mackie-designed gold metal barbarian-warrior bikini, gold cape optional. Eight packs of hair extensions. Dark sunglasses and collagen."

4. **Jason El Diablo:** "A sensible black, studded, PVC thong. Eight packs of hair extensions. Dark sunglasses and collagen." (I think he copied Cher's answer.)

5. **Amanda LaPore:** "Wear bottom eyelashes, honey." (I'm not sure she understood the question.)

6. **Kabuki Starshine:** "Take mostly feather dusters and room dividers. They look great in the water and they're not very expensive." (I'm not sure she understood the question at all.)

7. **Ricky Martin:** "I dunno. But whatever my image consultants say is a pretty good bet." (I'm not sure he understands any questions.)

8. **Miss Guy of the Toilet Boys:** "I'm taking studded dog collars and bracelets, rhinestone belts, T-Boys halter tops, knee-high bitch boots, and a bad attitude. I found lots of good stuff at the Wendy O. Williams estate sale!" ▶

9. **Andrew Smith:** "Seven-and-a-half-inch stilettos and Photoshop 5.0."

10. **John F. Kennedy, Jr.** never got back to me.

Bitter Love

by DAN BITTER

Hey Everyone:
After four years of writing this column, I feel that the salutation "Hey Breeder" is due for retirement. It just doesn't have the shock value it once had. But instead of dropping the salutation altogether, like *some* alternative sex advice columnists, I'll let you address me however you want — and I'll address you however I want. Here goes:

sex advice

Hey Asswipe!
I was dumbfounded to learn that dogs are not welcome at Burning Man, and that anyone who dares bring one will be charged an additional admission fee. Why am I writing to a sex advice column about this? Because my situation is unique. You see, my so-fine canine is my sex partner!

Now, I know what you're thinking, but really, it's not like that. My poochie-cooch and I have a very tender, loving, mutually-satisfying relationship, that happens to go a little further than your average pet/master dynamic. I just can't bear to leave my little "golden reliever" for six whole days (and nights!) but forking over another $100 feels like I'm getting the shaft. What should I do?

— Puppy Lover

Hey Muttfucker:
You are one sick puppy. Don't get me wrong — I'll be the first to admit that I've had my share of gravy train on my dick. But there's a fine line between adolescent experimentation and all-out bestial perversion, and buddy, you've crossed it. I mean, really, a dog may be a man's best friend, and it may be okay to fuck your best friend (if you get him drunk enough), but the equation isn't exactly transitive, if you get my drift.

It's a dog-eat-dog world my friend, not a dog-eat-man world, and not only is this behavior frowned upon in the civilized world, it's not too cool at Burning Man either. So I'd recommend leaving your cocksucker spaniel at home with a trusted friend — someone who won't take unfair advantage of the situation. And if you insist on bringing her, you'll just have to pay for your bitch like the rest of us.

Hey Fuckface!
I'm a single, female, 25-year-old professional in the Nevada area, and ever since the "ranch" I was working at shut down, I've been out of a job. A friend of mine suggested I'd get lots of business at Burning Man, but I'm not sure how to go about it. Any advice?

— Desert Escort

Hey Desperate Whore:
First of all, you cheap fucking tart, there's no commerce allowed at Burning Man, and that includes illegal commerce. But that doesn't stop the drug dealers, so why should it stop you? That said, any city of 20,000 should have a red-light district, and if Black Rock City has one, I'll bet it's on Venus, probably around 4:00 or so.

There will be a whole pork farm of cops this year though, so be discreet. If you're paranoid of being arrested for selling your nasty body like so much fish 'n' chips, you can always barter. Try making a big sign that says "Will Fuck For Food." Or, if it's not food you need, but say, a big diamond ring or whatever, you can trade sexual favors for just about anything. Then you're not *really* a hooker. You're just a smart girl.

Lastly though, I should warn you that prostitution is a dangerous business — it's a jungle in the desert, and you need someone to take care of you, sugar. I'll find you good customers, I'll give you a roof over your head and sexy street clothes, and I'll protect your ass from the wackos and creeps. And because I'm a fair kind of guy, I'll give you half of everything you make. So meet me at the café in Central Camp at midnight tonight, or else my friend Guido and his goons will see to it that you never work again — at least not without a paper bag over your head.

Hey Felch Breath:
I'm a studly, washed-up rock star who's married to a bimbo TV actress with big titties. At Burning Man a couple of years ago, we shot a porno of ourselves going at it for a few hours. I thought it was clear that the movie was just for our own personal enjoyment, but somehow it ended up on the Internet, and now everyone who's anyone has seen it.

Now, I'm ashamed to show my face at Burning Man. Some of my friends and former bandmates (I quit because they wouldn't leave me the fuck alone about the movie) told me that most men wouldn't give a shit. Well, I suppose it wouldn't be a big deal, if it weren't for the fact that I am EXTREMELY WELL HUNG. I mean, like a horse. So how can I have a normal conversation with people in the desert when they're standing there, picturing my UNBELIEVABLY HUGE MEMBER underneath my shorts? Please help me.

— Anonymous

Hey Tommy:
Get a life, loser. No wonder everyone hates you.

Confidential to Spencer T:
Listen, you nutcase, I didn't get naked for you on the streets of New York, and I'm not going to get naked for you in the desert, either. I've told you a million times that I was drunk that night and I don't even remember taking a bubble bath with you. So leave me alone and find some other chumps for your stupid picture.

Got a question for Dan Bitter? Keep it to yourself, asshole!

classifieds

PAPERBOYS & PAPERGIRLS WANTED TO HELP DELIVER *PISS CLEAR!*
Help deliver *Piss Clear* to the Black Rock City masses! We've got a bunch of different paper routes and a city of 20,000 to cover. Please stop by the *Piss Clear* offices at 4:00 and Venus and ask for Lois Layne. Come be a part of the *Piss Clear* delivery team! It's a fantastic way to meet people! An excellent conversation starter and ice-breaker! Make new friends! Get dates! Get laid! All while delivering the best newspaper in Black Rock City!

CAMP ATARI IS BACK!
Located around 7:30 and Mercury, this is our fourth year at Burning Man for most of us, and the second as camp ATARI! After such a great response last year, conceptualists Brandon and Randy knew they had to do it again. So this year, we're back with more Ataris, more Nintendos, and even a Pong unit or two! Sure, we loved Ataris back in the day, and we still love picking up those old consoles and cartridges these days at flea markets — but we were unprepared for the Atari *freaks* we met last year. Some of them cried at the sight of *Adventure* and hugged us while sobbing "thank you's." (We suspect the E's they had eaten may have had something to do with this.) And we aren't on the loud side of the city for nothing. Chances are, if you were into 8-bit electronics as a kid, you'll probably like the beats we're spinning this year. We'll be open every night from dusk (duh...can't see the TVs in the sun!) until we get tired—and as long as the gas for the generators holds out.

M*A*S*HCARA COSTUME PARTY THIS THURSDAY
At 4:00 and Venus, right after sundown. Why simply have a booze fest when you can also have a costume ball? There may even be some performances thrown into the brew. Lots of yammering and snickering. Emergency make-overs may be available. See you there!

RANGER RADIO HOUR
Ranger Director Big Bear reminds you, one and all, that that you *must* drink water in order to piss clear, and that beer ain't fucking water. Tune in to the Ranger Radio Hour every day at 1 p.m. on Radio Free Burning Man, 99.5 FM, to hear from the show's sponsor — water — and to get the day's schedule of events.

GIGSVILLE BIJOU THEATRE SHOWS FILMS NIGHTLY
Black Rock City grows a bit bigger each year, and what's a town without a movie theatre? This year, the sixth largest city in Nevada opens its very own indoor movie theater! The Gigsville Bijou Theater will be hosted by Prom Camp in a 20' by 40' tent. Two shows nightly, at 9 p.m. and midnight, starting on Tuesday night. Free fresh-popped popcorn and candy will be served, so bring along your lawn chair or relax on the shag carpet. Tuesday night is Comedy Night, with *Animal House,* starring John Belushi, at 9 p.m., and *Monty Python and The Holy Grail* at midnight. Wednesday is Sci-Fi Night, Thursday is Spook Night, and Friday is Porn Nite. Saturday's late night show will be *The Rocky Horror Picture Show,* at 1 a.m. Stop by Gigsville at 4:30 and Venus for a movie schedule and to find out the name of Thursday night's mystery movie. Hint: It's the scariest fuckin' movie in the world.

PISS CLEAR WANTS YOU!
Piss Clear, Black Rock City's *only* alternative newspaper, seeks writers, photographers, illustrators, and cartoonists for next year's editions. We're looking for people to assist in writing and compiling items for all the various columns and lists, in addition to writing features and rants. Photographs, illustrations, and comics are needed as well. If interested, contact Adrian Roberts at: pissclear@blue-period.com. Phone: 415.626.7882. Snail-mail: *Piss Clear,* 1388 Haight Street, Suite 232, San Francisco, CA 94117.

Things We'd Like To See at BM

Anyone who takes a photo of a nude person must also be nude themselves

a *friendly* bicycle repair camp

Black Rock City RV Park

Black Rock State University, along with some rival college, in order to have "The Big Game"

Car Alarm Camp

Condom Balloon Animals Camp

Do-It-Yourself Body Piercing Camp

a dog barbeque, to offend all the idiots who insisted on bringing their dogs

more explosions

gongs

Guitar Tuning Camp

Ice Cream Camp

an Internet cafe

JFK Jr. crash site

KOA Kampground, Black Rock City

fewer law enforcement officials

Leave No Trace

Loose Women & Fast Cars Camp

more naked boys

paved roads, dammit!

playa sherpas

running water in all camps

temporary neighborhood associations

Theme Camp Awards ceremony

Tiger Balm Masturbation Camp

a playa-colored trash fence

We Burn Our Man on Sunday Night Camp

Y2KMart

— list compiled by Dennis Hinkamp, Mike Tarrant, LadyBee, Penfold, Swirly Rat Jr., and Adrian Roberts

Even More Fashion Tips

Most people who live in deserts actually wear lots of clothes.

Put your lipstick, eyeliner, and nail polish in coolers — preferably in ziplock bags — unless you want to look like a Messy Bessy. In the harsh desert heat, your make-up can melt easily, making application to the face and body difficult at best.

You simply can't go wrong with glitter, sequins, and feathers.

Not only are sparkles, day-glo, and glitter fashionable, they make you a visible entity at night.

Nail polish dries ridiculously fast out here on the playa. Paint quickly, and be sure to keep plenty of thinner on hand.

Make-up is easier to apply on a clean face. Remember to wash up before applying that glitter powder and fuschia eyeliner.

There is a fine line between dirty and dreadlock.

Mud only feels good when it's wet.

Moisturizer is your friend. The arid Black Rock Desert can suck your skin dry, turning you into a flaky reptile. Moisturize a lot, and moisturize often.

Moisturizers are *nasty* when mixed with alkalai playa dust.

Goggles not only give one a kewl "cyber-hipster" look, but are also quite utilitarian, keeping playa dust out of one's eyes.

Use Nerf soccer balls to make a great pair of drag queen breasts.

You must suffer to be truly beautiful.

— compiled by Dennis Hinkamp, Erica Candy Kane, Playa Kitten, and Adrian Roberts